WHAT I CLAIM IS:

1. A method for distributing music over the internet, comprising the steps of:

(a) recognizing a plurality of musical compositions from a specimen provided by a person, by comparing a pattern derived from the specimen with patterns from a pattern library;

(b) sending information to identify the musical compositions in writing to the person over the internet;

(c) receiving a request from the person over the communication system for an audio preview of one of the musical compositions, which has been selected by the person;

(d) sending a corrupted version of some or all of the selected musical composition to the person over the internet;

(e) receiving a request from the person over the internet for the selected musical composition without corruption; and

(f) sending the selected musical composition without the corruption to the person,

wherein the pattern derived from the specimen comprises pitch and duration information.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the specimen is vocalized by the person.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising providing the person with a set of tempos to choose from and a set of keys to choose from before the person vocalizes the specimen.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the specimen is picked out by the person on a simulated musical instrument

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving the specimen over the internet and then deriving the pattern from the specimen.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the pattern derived from the specimen is received

over the internet.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein step (f) is conducted over the internet.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the corrupted version sent in step (d) comprises a short-duration snippet of the musical composition.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the duration of the snippet is less than about 15 seconds.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the corrupted version sent in step (d) comprises a plurality of isolated, short-duration snippets of the musical composition.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the corrupted version sent in step (d) has noise superimposed on it.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the noise comprises a repeated ticking sound superimposed on the musical composition.

.13. The method of claim 1, further comprising securing payment for the musical composition without corruption before conducting step (f).

14. A method for distributing music to a person over the internet, comprising the steps of:

(a) picking out a musical specimen on a simulated musical instrument, step (a) being conducted by the person;

(b) sending the specimen over the internet to a music distribution company;

(c) recognizing at least one candidate musical composition from the specimen, step (c) being conducted by the music distribution company;

(d) sending information to identify the at least candidate musical composition in writing to the person over the internet;

(e) selecting a musical composition from the at least one candidate musical composition, step (e) being conducted by the person;

(f) sending a request for an audio preview of the selected musical composition to the music distribution company over the internet;

(g) sending a corrupted version of some or all of the selected musical composition to the person over the internet; and

(h) sending the selected musical composition without corruption to the person over the internet.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the specimen comprises information identifying a sequence of notes picked out by the person in step (a).

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the specimen comprises information identifying a sequence of notes and the durations of the notes picked out by the person in step (a).

17. The method of claim 14, wherein the simulated musical instrument comprises a member selected from the group consisting of an image of a musical keyboard, an actual musical keyboard, and a manually operable alpha-numeric keyboard.

18. A method of recognizing a musical composition from a specimen of a musical composition that has been vocalized or picked out by a person, comprising the steps of:

(a) generating a pattern from the specimen; and

(b) comparing the pattern generated in step (a) with patterns in a pattern library; and

(c) identifying at least one musical composition from the comparison conducted in step (b).

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the specimen is vocalized by the person, and wherein step (a) comprises extracting features from the specimen.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the specimen is picked out by the person on a simulated musical instrument.